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THURSDAY, JUNE 5, 1997

D-11 passes family policy

■ **Board rejects requirement to stress teaching heterosexual marriage.**

By **Wendy Y. Lawton**/The Gazette

The Colorado Springs School District 11 school board Wednesday night rejected a policy promoted by Colorado for Family Values that would have required teachers to promote the benefits of heterosexual marriage.

Instead, the board passed a rule saying parents are the primary source of guidance for kids about "marriage, procreation, sexuality and individual lifestyle."

The new policy won't change what students learn about sex or relationships in the region's largest school district.

But it does affirm the current lessons on abstinence. It also states sex-education lessons must include the advantages of raising children in "stable, committed, mature, long-term family relationships."

But the makeup of those families is not defined.

The separate 5-1 votes — school board member Art Nutter in the minority and Vice President Sherry Butcher absent — put an end to a sometimes heated public debate and private, personal struggles by some board members to form moral opinions.

The decisions also ended a four-month campaign by Colorado for Family Values for a school rule that would do three things: affirm heterosexual marriage, promote abstinence and discourage promiscuity.

After the votes, CFV Chairman Will Perkins said he was pleased the board made good on two of the three requests made by his conservative Christian group. But in his mind, the meeting wasn't a total victory.

"To have our public school district say they can't affirm the institution of legal marriage without offending someone is ludicrous to me," he said.

But offending gay couples, single parents and others would be the result, some board members said Wednesday.

See **D-11**/NEWS5

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Gielinski's friends schedule benefit to establish memorial scholarship

The Gazette

Friends of Jacine Gielinski, the 22-year-old woman who was kidnapped, raped and killed April 29 in Colorado Springs, have organized a scholarship benefit in her memory.

Tiny Barge & The Big Chill, Thunder Mountain and B-Positive will provide live music at Rocky Mountain Greyhound Park from 6 to 10 p.m. Sunday.

A $10 donation is requested at the door. Food, microbrews and domestic beers will be sold. Gift certificates from restaurants, department stores and Air Force tickets will be auctioned.

The goal is to raise $10,000 to fund a scholarship in Gielinski's name through the University of Colorado Foundation. Gielinski was a student at CU-Colorado Springs.

Spri in fa

By **Dennis Hu**
The Gazette

A Colorad in jail Wedn stabbing his the throat a year-old mo Paso County

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D-11/Legal challenges feared

From NEWS1

The issue isn't merely one of offending families. School district attorney Sharon Thomas warned members at the meeting the CFV proposal could leave the district open to legal challenges or lawsuits because it could squelch teachers' free speech rights.

Thomas said any statement supporting heterosexual marriage could be seen as evidence against the district if people felt they were fired or not hired based on sexual orientation.

The emotional debate Wednesday mirrored a personal struggle for some board members, a struggle that played out in their hearts and minds since the CFV proposal surfaced in January.

Why? Because deciding if schools should teach students about the "right" kind of marriage is different than most board votes. It's not a decision based on budgets or education research. It's a decision based on values.

In interviews this week, many members said they pulled from personal experiences — childhoods, marriages, faith and moral compasses — to form opinions.

On one side is Nutter, who supported the CFV proposal. He said having his mother and father at home provided the perfect balance between love and discipline for him and his eight brothers and sisters — the same balance he said he and his wife give their six children.

Then there's his Catholic faith.

"The 10 Commandments say 'Honor thy mother *and* thy father,'" Nutter said this week. "Marriage is sacred. It's not a guy with a guy or a girl with a girl. If marriage isn't between a guy and a girl and God, it won't work."

On the other side are board members such as Bruce Doyle and Lyman Kaiser.

In interviews, Doyle and Kaiser said, like Nutter, they believe a solid, caring marriage between a man and woman is what's best for kids. But they don't feel they should force their values on others.

For example, Kaiser said he believes strongly in democratic values ingrained in him during 25 years in the Air Force.

In a democracy, Kaiser said, people hold different opinions about religion, politics and what makes the best family. Parents have different ideas about marriage, they should be the ones to pass them on to their children.

Doyle agrees, for different reasons.

Growing up in Albuquerque, Doyle said he learned early to respect all people.

Promoting heterosexual marriage would run counter to this value, Doyle said, because it would be disrespectful and hurtful to gays and anyone not in a two-parent family.

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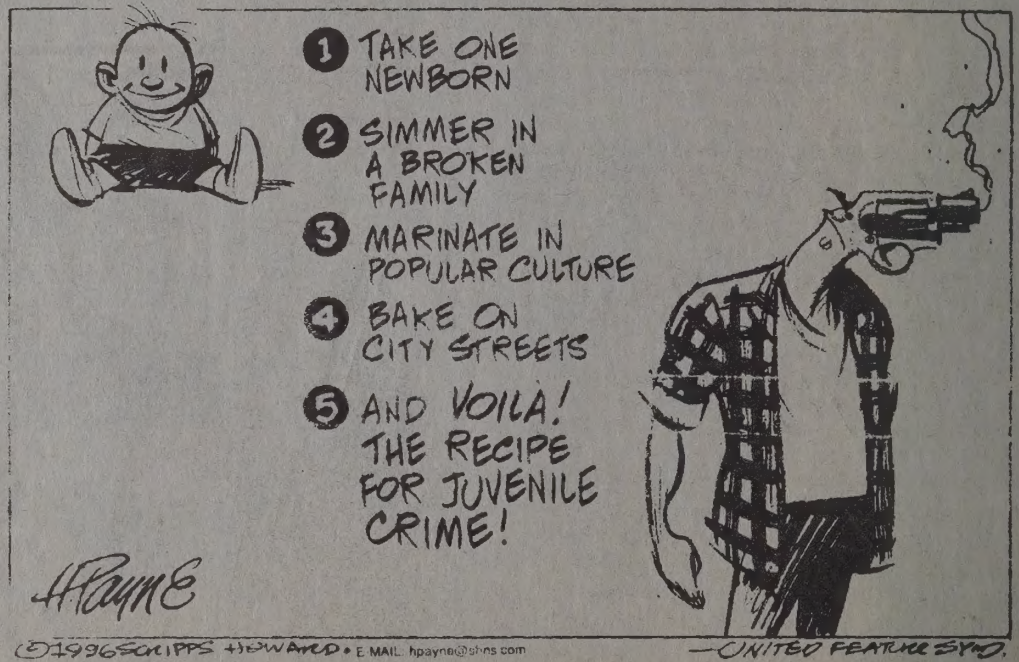
FIREARM SAFETY

Don't confuse gun control, crime control

When Congress reconvenes, a major piece of legislation awaiting it is the Juvenile Crime Control Act. This bill proposes incentives for states to try more youths accused of violent crimes and other felonies as adults, with correspondingly stiffer penalties. Unfortunately, some lawmakers have threatened to derail this important legislation by including an amendment forcing firearm owners to install trigger locks on weapons stored at home. This lock requirement is unnecessary and counterproductive.

Existing laws provide for heavy penalties — even felony charges — against those who are reckless or negligent in handling firearms. Mechanical "safety" devices like trigger locks are no substitute

Henry Payne /Scripps Howard News Service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in the real-world counterpart to the "Geech" comic strip. I knew someone a lot

As an example, I am overwhelmed at the severance pay packages that have been